

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-13

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NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SAM-01 PM-07

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TO USINFO WASHDC PRIORITY

SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1338

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

DIA WASHDC

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USINFO FOR IPO/M, IPS, IBS, INE

BEIRUT FOR VOA AND RAPA

ROME FOR VOA

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

SUMMARY: MEDIA HIGHLIGHT PM MEIR'S STATEMENT,
ON OCCASION OF PRESIDENTIAL REQUEST TO FORM
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NEW GOVERNMENT, THAT ISRAEL "MAY BE AT

BEGINNING OF ROAD TO PEACE." PROSPECTS OF ISRAELI-SYRIAN TROOP SEPARATION TALKS REMAIN FOCAL ITEM. PRESS, WARY OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN DISENGAGEMENT WITH SYRIA. REFLECT CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM THAT NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT MOVE AHEAD NEXT MONT. PERTURBED BY EGYPTIAN PROPAGANDA THAT TROOP SEPARATION GIVES EGYPT BETTER MILITARY LEVER, POLITICAL WRITERS STRESS THAT ACTIONS--RATHER THAN TALK--IS TEST OF EGYPT'S INTENTIONS. PROFESSOR GROSS(FOR HAARETZ) URGES ISRAEL TO STAND FIRM ON PRINCIPLE OF DEMILITARIZATION IN CONCLUDING NEXT AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT AND CERTAINLY AS PART OF TROOP SEPARATION WITH SYRIA. PRESS ALSO REPORTS NEW BLOC FORMED BY NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY TO SAFE-

GUARD "SOVEREIGNTY AND INTEGRITY OF ANCESTRAL HERITAGE." DAVAR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT REPORTS ON CONFLICTING ESTIMATES IN US OF SOVIET GLOBAL INTENTION AND ADVERSE IMPLICATION OF SUEZ CANAL OPENING ON US INTERESTS IN PERSIAN GULF. AFTERNOON PRESS AND RADIO CARRY EXCERPTS FROM PRESIDENT NIXON'S STATE OF UNION; EMPHASIS ON STATEMENT THAT ARAB OIL EMBARGO TO US WILL SOON BE LIFTED. END SUMMARY..

ISRAELI-SYRIAN DISENGAGEMENT

(A) HAARETZ REPORTS: "SENIOR POLITICAL OBSERVERS IN JERUSALEM EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THE USSR WILL SOON EXPAND ITS OLITICAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE OBERVERS BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIET SILENCE DURING ISRAELI EGYPTIAN DISENGAGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS STEMMED FROM ITS INTEREST IN AN OPEN CANAL AND ITS INTEREST IN CREATING A CALMER ATMOSPHERE IN REGION TO LIMIT ITS MILITARY INVOLVEMENT

HOWEVER, OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT HAVING US TO ORCHESTRATE ALONE ON POLITICAL CONTACTS IN REGION."

(B) JERUSALEM POST WRITES:"THE PRSENT IMPASSE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND SYRIA MAY BE BROKEN DURING NEXT MONTH AND NEGOTIATIONS MAY BEGIN ON DISENGAGEMENT OF FORCES IN THE NORTH...THIS IS THE ESTIMATE OF WELL-PLACED SOURCES IN UNCLASSIFIED

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JERUSALEM. THE SOURCES ATTRIBUTE THEIR OPTIMISM TO US SECRETARY KISSINGER..WHO BELIEVES THAT SYRIA CANNOT LONG COUNTENANCE THE ISRAELI PRESENCE IN SYRIA.." POST (SAFADI) ALSO NOTES: "EGYPT AND SYRIA ARE EXPECTED TO HOLD EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS.."ON THE QUESTION OF DISENGAGEMENT ON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS. THESE CONSULTATIONS WILL FOLLOW WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS 'CERTAIN IDEAS' WHICH DR. KISSINGER HAS COMMUNICATED TO BOTH EGYPT AND SYRIA IN THE LIGHT OF ISRAEL'S

LATEST VIEWS EXPRESSED AT LAST
SUNDAY'S CABINET MEETING."

(C) ADDRESSING JEWISH AGENCY BOARD OF GOVERNORS,
PM MEIR IS QUOTED AS SAYING ISRAEL "DOES NOT INTEND TO
REMAIN IN THE AREAS IT TOOK IN SYRIA DURING THE OCTOBER WAR
AND THAT ISRAEL WANTS AN AGREEMENT...ON SEPARATION OF
FORCES. ISRAEL, HOWEVER, WILL NO OPEN NEGOTIATIONS UNLESS
THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT OVSERVES THE GENEVA CONVENTION
AND SUBMITS A LIST OF POWS..." MRS. MEIR SAID THAT SHE
PRESUMED DR. KISSINGER AND THE SOVIET UNION HAVE
APPEALED TO SYRIA TO DO SO, BUT THAT THESE APPEALS HAVE
BORE NO FRUIT. PM ASSERTED THAT ISRAEL WILL NEITHER
NEGOTIATE WITH PALESTINIAN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS NOR
AGREE

TO THEIR PARTICIPATION AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.
SHE ALSO SAID THAT UNEF FORCES BELONGING TO COUNTRIES
WITHOUT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL WILL NOT
BE PERMITTED INTO ISRAELI TERRITORY.

(D) HATZOFI REPORTS: "PROGRESS IN CONTACTS WITH SYRIA ON
TROOP SEPARATION IS EXPECTED BY THE END OF MARCH..THIS IS
LEARNED FROM POLITICAL CIRCLES IN JERUSALEM..THERE WAS A
FEAR THAT ISRAEL WILL BE DRAGGED INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH SYRIA
THROUGH EXCHANGE OF PROPOSALS BY DR. KISSINGER. THEREFORE
GOI DECIDED TO BLOCK THIS ROUTE BY DECLARING THAT NO NEGOTIATIONS
WILL COMMENCE BEFORE ISRAEL RECEIVES A LIST OF POWS. POLITICAL
CIRCLES BELIEVE THAT THERE IS NO URGENCY ON TROOP SEPARATION
IN THE NORTH. NO POSITION ON MOST DESIRABLE TROOP SEPARATION
ARRANGEMENT FOR ISRAEL HAS BEEN FORMULATED YET."

ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN DISENGAGEMENT

(A) HAARETZ REPORTS: " ISRAEL ITCONTINUES ITS PREPARATIONS
IN ANTICIPATION OF ADDITIONAL WITHDRAWALS FROM THE CANAL WEST
BANK DESPITE THE FACT THAT UNTIL YESTERDAY EGYPTIAN HAD
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NOT COMMENCED REDUCTION OF UNITS FROM THEIR THIRD ARMY,
PER THE TROOP SEPARATION AGREEMENT...EGYPT HAS TO LAY
BRIDGES ACROSS THE CANAL TO MOVE HEAVY VEHICLES..THIS
SEEMS TO BE THE MAIN REASON FOR THE DELAY....."

(B) DAVAR EDITORIALIZES: "EGYPTIAN MEDIA IS PRESENTING
(THE TROOP SEPARATION) AS AN EGYPTIAN MILITARY SUCCESS...
WHICH OPENS A PATH TO THE THIRD ARMY TO ENHANCE ITS
STRENGTH IN ANTICIPATION OF A RESUMED MILITARY THREAT IN
SINAI..TO SAY THINGS PUBLICLY AND ACT OTHERWISE IN
THE FIELD MAY NOT BE A HARBINGER OF A TURNING POINT...
BUT IN ITSELF IS NOT A DEVIATION FROM THE AGREEMENT..ALL
WE HAVE TO DO IS WAIT UNTIL FEBRUARY 4 TO VERIFY
EGYPT'S INTENTIONS."

(C) AL MANISHMAR STATES : " SENIOR OBSERVERS IN JERUSALEM
BELIEVE EGYPT WILL COMPLY WITH TROOP SEPARATION..IN ORDER TO

SEEK MORE ISRAELI FLEXIBILITY FOR THE NEXT STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS...
AND TO AVOID ISRAELI CLAIMS THAT EGYPT IS VIOLATING THE AGREEMENT.

REGARDING THE CONTINUATION OF TALKSWITH EGYPT, IT IS NOT YET KNOWN
WHEN THE NEXT STAGE WILL START. IT IS NOT KNOWN WHETHER EGYPT
WISHES A SECOND PHASE OF TROOP SEPARATION OR TALKS ON A TOTAL.

CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT WE ARE NOT HEADING TOWARD AN IMPASSE
AS FAR AS THE SOUTHERN FRONT IS CONCERNEDAND THAT A TOTAL
PEACE SETTLEMENT WITH EGYPT WILL BE COMPLETED WITHIN A
YEAR."

ARAB OIL EMBARGO

SUGGESTING THAT THE ARAB OIL EMBARGO ALREADY HAS
BEEN QUIETLY AND GRADUALLY LIFTED(IN EUROPE TOO), MAARIV
EDITORIAL COMMENTS: " THE FORMAL LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO,
EXPECTED SOON, IS NEITHER POLITICAL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF
KISSINGER, NOR THE PRIZE WHICH PRESIDENT SADAT IS GIVING
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HIS MEDIATION..ALL IN ALL
THIS IS MEANT TO COORDINATE THE EXISTING SITUATON(I.E.
NO EMBARGO) WITH THE ARAB DECLARATION."
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